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Note verbale dated 12 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretariat

The Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations and has the honour to enclose Georgia's voluntary pledges and commitments in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 12 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretariat

Aide-memoire: Georgia and the Human Rights Council

Voluntary pledges and commitments in conformity with General Assembly resolution 60/251

The Government of Georgia made a decision to nominate the candidacy of Georgia for a membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council for a seat allocated to Eastern European countries.

Having gained its independence, Georgia made its choice to build a state based on democratic values and the rule of law, to integrate into international community, European structures.

Human rights issues have always represented one of the highest priorities for Georgia. Since the Rose Revolution of 2003, the new Government of Georgia has unequivocally expressed its commitment to improve human rights situation in the country.

For the time being, many significant steps have already been made to better promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Georgia is a State party to a series of United Nations and Council of Europe human rights instruments, in particular:

- Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Optional Protocols.
- Covenant on Economical, Social and Cultural Rights.
- Convention of the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Optional Protocol.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol.
- Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination.
- International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocols 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12 and 13.
- European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- European Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine.
- Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities.
- European Social Charter (revised).

The Georgian Parliament ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court that entered into force for Georgia in December 2003.

Most recently, the instrument of ratification or accession has been sent to the depositary with respect to:

- Amendment to Article 20, paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- Protocol 14 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.
- Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine concerning Transplantation of Organs and Tissues of Human Origin.

Georgia has never been a member of the United Nations human rights bodies; however, Georgia has always participated in the constructive dialogue with the United Nations agencies and representatives dealing with human rights issues and will continue following this way in the future.

From the very beginning, Georgia supported the initiative to establish the Human Rights Council, with a stronger mandate to monitor and ensure the implementation of commitments undertaken by member States.

As regards future actions aimed at further strengthening promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in the nearest future Georgia pledges itself to:

- At the domestic level:

- Accede to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

- Sign and ratify European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

- Ratify Additional Protocol to the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine, concerning Biomedical Research.

- Ratify the European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

- Complete and submit to the respective Treaty Monitoring Bodies the next periodic reports on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- Co-operate with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), within the framework of the next ECRI country visit to Georgia.

- At the international level:

- Promote strengthening of the Human Rights Council's involvement and activities, first and foremost, in conflict areas worldwide (including *de-facto* uncontrolled territories), in order to promote the respect for and implementation of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, especially most vulnerable groups.

- Closely co-operate with the Human Rights Council, other respective human rights bodies and related agencies within the United Nations, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, in order to promote and ensure full realization of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in their interrelation and indivisibility and without any discrimination.

- Promote active international reaction and monitoring of human rights violations in Abkhazia and South Ossetia/Tskhinvali region, especially in Gali district of Abkhazia, Georgia including the establishment of joint UN/OSCE human rights office in Gali, deployment of UN civilian police component and unimpeded instruction of mother tongue for the ethnic Georgian population in the district as important human rights protection and confidence-building measures.

- Contribute to preservation and enhancement of the systems of special procedures. In this respect, Georgia reaffirms its readiness to further co-operate with the UN special procedures, including the readiness to receive their visits. Moreover, it is in the interests of Georgia that these visits encompass whole territory under its jurisdiction, including the regions currently *de-facto* out of control on the part of the State.

- Participate in the constructive dialogue with United Nations Treaty Monitoring Bodies. In 2006, this is about Committee against Torture and Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in connection with the consideration of periodic reports of Georgia under CAT and CEDAW.

- Make special emphasis on the strengthening of gender equality, the rights of women, the rights of the child and minority rights.